

THE
GRECIAN, ROMAN, AND GOTHIC
Architecture,
CONSIDERED AS APPLICABLE TO
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS,
IN THIS COUNTRY;
To which are added,
Some Remarks
ON
ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE,
DESIGNED TO RECOMMEND, AND TO INTRODUCE A MORE CORRECT TASTE
INTO THE RESIDENCES OF THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY WILLIAM FOX,

AUTHOR OF

"SIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS MADE ON A TOUR THROUGH VARIOUS PARTS
OF EUROPE," — "LA BAGATELLA, A DESCRIPTIVE POEM," —
"CURSORY REMARKS ON APELEUTHERUS," &c. &c.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JOHN HATCHARD AND SON,
N° 187, PICCADILLY.

1821.

Price Five Shillings.

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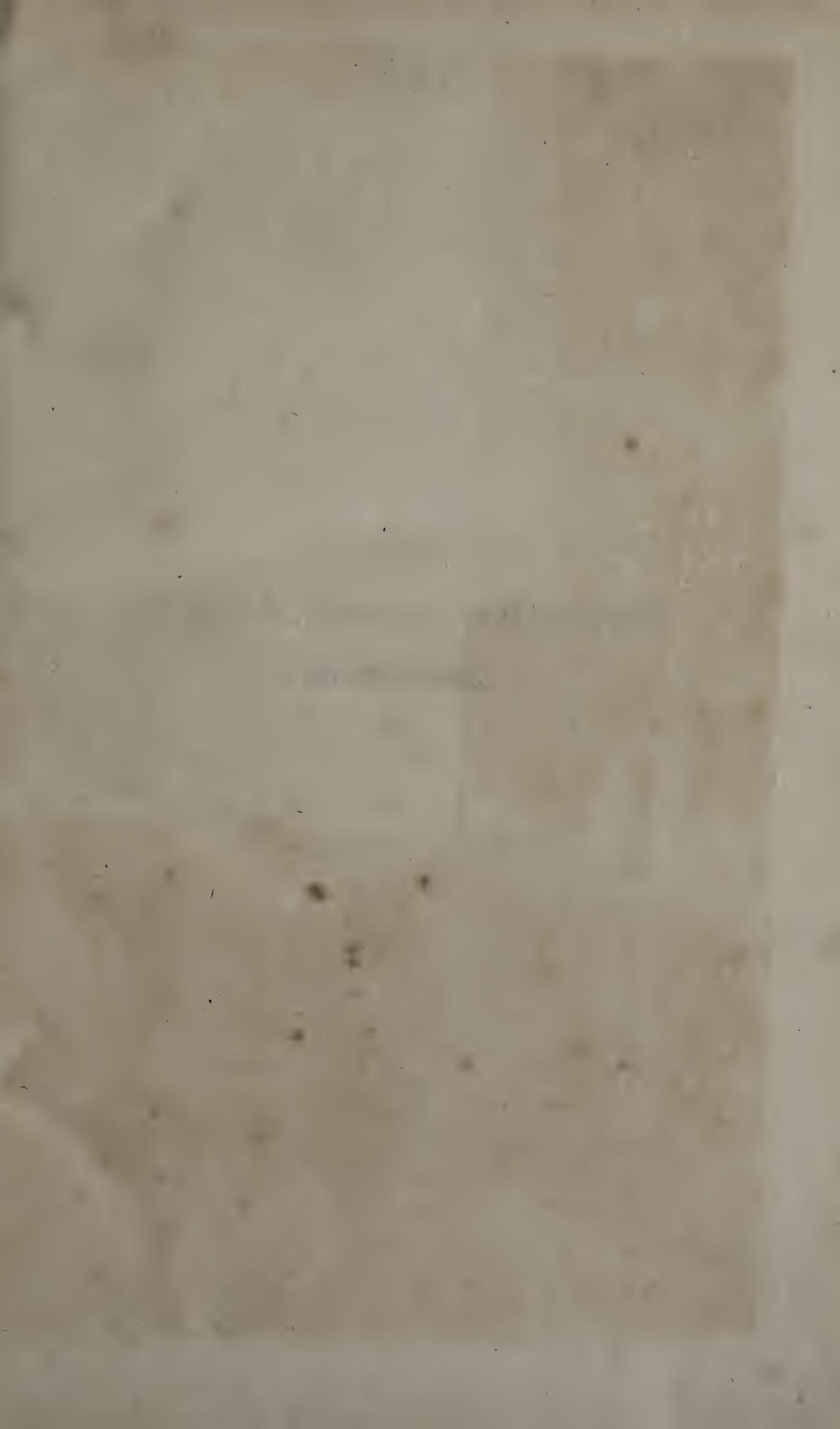
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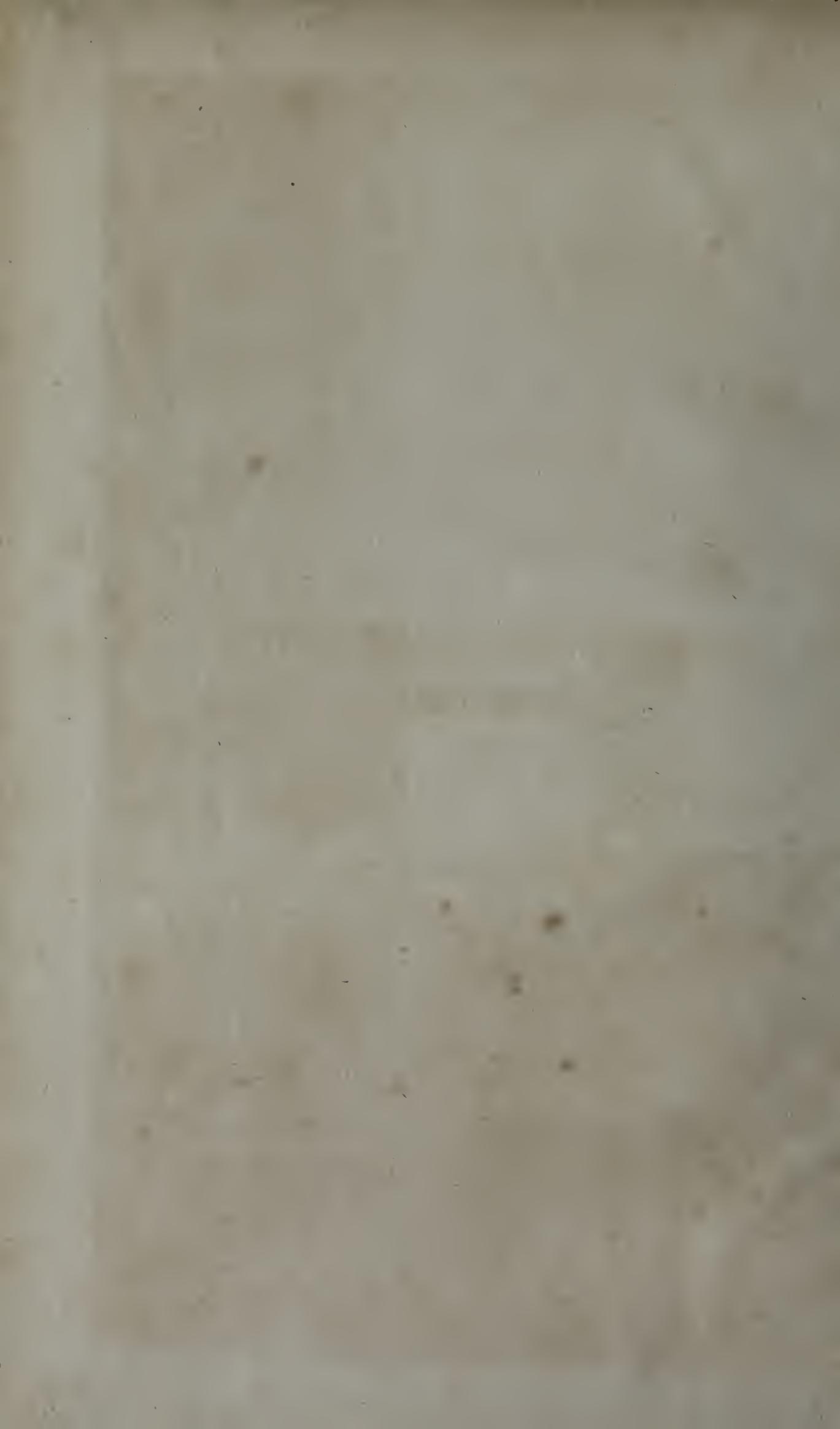
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P R E F A C E.

HAVING been led to engage *professionally* in some pursuits connected with the fine arts, which, during several past years, were considered as merely an amusement, I now venture, in the following pages, to submit, with great deference, some of my particular opinions thereon to the public eye.

This Essay was originally designed as an introduction to a larger work, wherein examples were given, illustrative of the opinions here advanced.

Some reasons, however, which, it is judged will be admitted as sufficiently strong, prevailed with me to suppress the work in its original form, although considerable progress had been made in preparing the specimens intended to be brought forward.

In the first place, the present introductory remarks had already swelled to a volume; and secondly, I was unwilling, by raising into public notice a variety of instances of bad taste, to wound the feelings of any contemporary artist; and am better satisfied in leaving my publication in a less perfect state, than to risk giving pain to one respectable individual. I have, therefore, in the following observations, carefully abstained from distinctly marking, either the work or the name of any living artist, unless it has been to commend the one, or in the hope of serving the other.

It is delightful to praise and to admire; and the numerous examples in a contrary strain in the succeeding pages will, it is hoped, be considered as arising not from any proneness to descry and to expose what is imperfect, but from the wish to recommend a higher, and a more improved style of art in this country.

I am aware that many of the opinions here delivered will meet with opposition; upon which, I can truly aver, that I entertain no further predilection for them than what arises from the conviction that they are founded on correct principles; derived, not from fashion, or local prejudice, or partial views, but gathered from the nature of the objects themselves, as con-

nected with the purposes to which they are designed to be applied.

As, however, these opinions, in many cases, differ so widely from common practice, I have thought it needful, in the notes subjoined, to support almost every opinion here advanced by some authority of acknowledged judgment and taste.

Those who are strangers to such inquiries, would scarcely credit the large sums which are annually expended both on public and private buildings, on what are termed ornaments, decorations, and improvements, in so bad a taste as would do little credit to the most degraded periods of the arts in this country*. At one

* "In my opinion buildings might be much more varied than they are; for, after *fitness* hath been strictly and mechanically complied with, any additional ornamental members, or parts, may be varied with equal elegance; nor can I help thinking, but that churches, palaces, hospitals, prisons, common houses, and summer houses, might be built more in distinct characters than they are, by contriving orders suitable to each; whereas, were a modern architect to build a palace in Lapland, or the West Indies, Palladio must be his guide; nor would he dare to stir a step without his book."

time the heaviness of the Egyptian, at another the Gothic, and then the Chinese*, or the French have, in alternate succession, taken possession of the public fancy, and have been adopted without regard to proprieties in their adaptation, arrangements, or decorations.

The fondness for the Gothic style of building and ornaments, has led to greater absurdities than could have been conceived by persons not accustomed to examine any objects of taste *as a whole*. The Gothic, the Grecian, and an occasional addition of some modern conceit, have frequently composed a singular and almost ludicrous intermixture.

Till very lately, several of our college chapels and cathedrals exhibited this intermixture in its most odious forms.

The bad taste displayed in the interior of

* “ Imitations of Chinese buildings have a kind of vogue, chiefly on account of their novelty: and not only these, but any other new-invented characters of building might be regulated by proper principles. The mere ornaments of buildings might be allowed a greater latitude than they are at present; as capitals, frieses, &c. in order to increase the beauty of variety.”

Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty,

many of our best houses is also exceedingly striking;—rooms are crowded with superfluous furniture, which encumbers rather than adorns them. In the hangings, and the mural and other ornaments, it frequently happens that little or no attention is paid to the due adaptation of colours, or to the style and *character* of the apartment; so that the eye, instead of being gratified with an assemblage of what is beautiful, and chaste, and *appropriate*, is repelled by the glare of a mass of whimsical and costly absurdities.

In the erection or improvement of private dwellings, the proprietor is sometimes led into a large and needless expense, a considerable proportion of which might be spared by the judicious applications of the principles of a correct taste.

It may be further remarked, that many of the most delightfully situated residences in the kingdom, remain without adequate advantages having been taken of the beauty of the scite; for want of discernment in producing effect, by opening windows in a part of the building which had been injudiciously hidden; by planting or removing trees, or altering the character of contiguous ground; or from some other cause

which an eye, accustomed to such objects, would instantly discern.

Many antiquated and almost deserted buildings might, at a comparatively small expense, be converted into not only comfortable, but elegant abodes, by the application of these principles.

The same principles are equally applicable in the laying out of pleasure grounds, and garden scenery. The eye that is habituated to examine the face of nature with a view to picturesque effect, will promptly decide on those arrangements of trees, water, lawn, and flower beds, which will produce the happiest, and oftentimes the most unexpected results, and this not unfrequently, at a very inconsiderable expenditure both of labour and cost.

It is somewhat singular that, in the present very advanced state of the arts in this country, no one has stepped forward, *professionally*, with an attempt to lead the public taste on these subjects, by a reference to *simple principles*, which require only to be exhibited and illustrated by examples, to be universally seen and recognised.

One of the greatest impediments to the

attainment of excellence in all the arts, as I have elsewhere observed, is, that devotedness to system, which would make every thing yield to its domination, without regard either to the nature, or the design of the materials on which taste is to be exercised.

It would appear in the eyes of such, as if there existed beauty only of one kind; and that every object, and every place and situation, must be brought to conform to this particular standard;—not reflecting that there are beauties of a great variety of classes;—that a huge castle may have its appropriate beauties, as well as a diminutive temple; the characters of the one being those of massiveness and strength—of the other, lightness and elegance;—that a mountain may have beauty, as well as a valley; the one—consisting in its romantic grandeur and vastness, the other in its verdant and retired meanderings. Those, however, who entertain the principle above referred to, will see beauty only of one individual character, and will endeavour to make every thing yield to their favourite system. If, for instance, it be that smoothness is the standard, all that deviates therefrom will be levelled to this opinion;—if, on the other hand, the opposite system be adopted, and that nothing but what is rude and picturesque is deemed

beautiful, the rule will be applied with equal pertinacity. Having ventured, on some of these points, to controvert, in the following Essay, one of the favourite principles of a very accomplished judge* in such subjects, I am anxious to shelter myself under an authority which is entitled to, and has obtained the highest public respect;—I mean Dugald Stewart, who, in analysing the opinions of Mr. Price, on the connexion between landscape painting, and landscape gardening, has the following striking passages, the whole spirit of which I have no hesitation to adopt in the most unqualified manner.

“ As to the application of the knowledge acquired from the study of painting, to the improvement of natural landscape, I have no doubt that, to a superior understanding and taste, like those of Mr. Price, it may often suggest very useful *hints*; but, if recognised as the standard to which the ultimate appeal is to be made, it would infallibly cover the face of the country with a new and systematical species of affectation, not less remote than that of Brown from the style of gardening which he wishes to recommend.”

* Uvedale Price, Esq.

“ To this it may be added, that, as an object which is offensive in reality may please in painting; so, many things which would offend in painting, may yet please in reality. If, in some respects, therefore, the study of painting is a useful auxiliary in the art of creating landscape; in others there is, at least, a possibility that it may lead the judgment astray, or impose unnecessary fetters on the imagination.”

“ I have only to remark further, that in laying out grounds, still more perhaps than in any other of the fine arts, the primary object of a good taste is, not to please the connoisseur, but to please the enlightened admirer and lover of nature. The perfection of all these arts is, undoubtedly, to give pleasure to both; as they always will, and must do, when the taste of the connoisseur is guided by good sense and philosophy. Pliny justly considered it as the highest praise he could bestow on the exquisite beauties of a Corinthian antique, when he sums up his description of them, by observing—‘ *Talia de-nique omnia, ut possint artificum oculos tenere, delectare imperitorum.*’ Objects of whatever kind, which please the connoisseur alone, prove only that there is something fundamentally wrong in the principles upon which he judges; and most of all do they authorise this conclusion,

when nature herself is the subject upon which the artist is to operate, and where the chief glory of art is to work unseen."

"Upon the whole, let painting be allowed its due praise in quickening our attention to the beauties of nature; in multiplying our resources for their further embellishment; and, in holding up a standard from age to age to correct the caprices of fashionable innovations: but let our taste for these beauties be *chiefly* formed on the study of nature herself; nor let us ever forget so far what is due to *her* indisputable and salutary prerogative, as to attempt an encroachment upon it by laws, which derive the whole of their value from her sanction*."

The notions of Winkleman and Dubos, that eminence in the fine arts depends mostly, if not entirely, on climate; and that, therefore, we

* Philosophical Essays, Chap. v. p. 285-6-7.

"I shall add no more to what I have here offered, "than that music, architecture, and painting, as well as "poetry and oratory, are to deduce their laws and rules "from the general sense and taste of mankind, and not "from the principles of these arts themselves; or, in "other words, the taste is not to conform to the art, but "the art to the taste."

are a little too far northward to hope for success in such pursuits, are now pretty generally exploded; but some attempts have been lately made to establish another belief, equally unfriendly to the pursuit of eminence in the arts, namely, that because we are a great people in so many other respects, as legislators, as warriors, as statesmen, as bold and intrepid supporters of liberty, and as magnanimous in the whole of our national character and conduct, *therefore*, we are not fitted to excel in the more elegant arts.

To confute an opinion so totally unfounded, we need only refer to antient Greece, the very cradle and nursery of all that is beautiful in art; and where, it may be asked, through the whole compass of history shall we find a people so truly great in whatever can dignify and ennable the human character? Who so daring in arms—so devoted to liberty? Where do we meet with writers so accomplished and profound in every science, and on every subject; and where a more enthusiastic attachment to their country, than in the antient Greeks?—and yet these were precisely the people among whom the fine arts arose, and flourished in a degree that has never yet been rivalled, and which probably will never be surpassed.

With these, their liberties and their greatness arose ; and these and their independence expired together.

So far from considering the study of what is elevated and lofty in art, as calculated to lower the tone of the national character, I must confess I am compelled to entertain a very opposite opinion. In retiring from the view of the *chef-d'œuvres* of our best historic painters, for instance, or from the works of some of our modern architects and sculptors, in which much of the beauty of Grecian art has been caught, and embodied, with other productions borrowed from the same perfect source, I would appeal to the spectator, whether his tone of feeling or sentiment have been lowered by such a survey; or, whether, on the contrary, they have not been raised and ennobled ?

W. F.

2, Craven Street, Strand,
Feb. 1, 1821.

THE
GRECIAN, ROMAN, AND GOTHIC
Architecture, &c.

MORE than half a century has now elapsed, since this country was first favoured with correct^a representations of many of the finest buildings of antient Greece, and from that period to the present day, our travellers^b have contributed to

^a Mr. Stuart (better known by the name of Athenian Stuart,) published his first volume of “Athens” in 1762.

^b “ My impatience to visit some of the principal monuments of this celebrated spot (Athens) would not permit me either to eat or to sit down, till I had made the circuit of the Acropolis, and had

enrich our stock of materials from those classic regions, so that at this time, there is scarcely any nation in Europe which possesses a greater number of specimens of Grecian and of Roman art^c.

“ venerated the successful labours of Attic genius.
 “ I have seen these stupendous remains only with a
 “ glance, and cannot collect words to express my
 “ admiration. I feel as if hitherto I had seen nothing
 “ —since no comparison can be instituted between
 “ all the efforts of human talent which I have
 “ hitherto witnessed, and the objects which have
 “ this day struck my astonished senses.”

Twedell's Remains, Letter LX. Dated, ATHENS, Dec. 29, 1789.

“ “ The more we examine, the more strong will
 “ be the assurance, that whatever in the fine arts of
 “ later times is of a superior order, or distinguished
 “ for the beauty of its formation, is derived from the
 “ Greeks. The people of Greece seem to have been
 “ peculiarly endowed with an acute discrimination
 “ of excellence, and to have almost reached per-
 “ fection in whatever they undertook in the pursuit
 “ of elegant art. Their architecture, sculpture,
 “ costume, decorations, and whatever serves to
 “ embellish a nation, appear to have been the per-
 “ formances of an enlightened race of beings, who
 “ acted on notions of refinement scarcely attainable

With advantages so distinguished, it is but reasonable to expect that Great Britain, which ranks so high in the arts and sciences generally, should also, in whatever relates to objects of taste, such as her public buildings—her churches—her palaces—and in the dwellings of opulence—exhibit an equally distinguished pre-eminence in architectural grandeur and magnificence. How great then is the surprise of foreigners, and how mortifying to the feelings of every man of taste, in passing through our metropolis, to observe edifices rising up in endless succession, of such a character as would do little credit to the lowest periods of the arts in this

“ by the rest of mankind. In their temples, architecture seems to have exhausted her powers, for succeeding ages have not been able to improve upon their performances : the attempt to do so has only served to shew the superior excellence of their orders.”

Stanley's Essay on the Superiority of the Greeks in Art.

country: “The metropolis of the British Empire,” says the elegant Eustace, “though the first city in Europe, and I suppose in the world, for neatness, convenience, and cleanliness, is yet inferior in architectural embellishments to most capitals.”—“The streets of London, Oxford, and Cambridge,” he adds, “present a variety of shapeless buildings, all raised at an enormous expense, for eternal monuments of the opulence, and the bad taste of the British Nation.”

^a One of the most striking of our general defects appears to be, that a monotonous

^a “Since the chief remains of the Grecian architecture consists of religious edifices, it requires no common skill to apply it to those of a different destination, without either violating its character, or conveying to the building the air of a heathen temple.

“The Italian style, whose origin is dated from the revival of the arts, although popularly denomi-

and uniform style is followed, without any regard to particular and appropriate adaptation. A theatre, a church, a palace, an hospital, a public warehouse, or a private house, are all built upon the same plan, and embellished with the same ornaments ; and the Grecian portico, which was anciently employed on edifices of the most sacred character^e, is, with us, brought to

" nated Grecian ; and although founded upon the " Greek and Roman orders, has, nevertheless, necessarily acquired a character distinct from that of " the preceding ; less severe in its forms, less chaste " in its decorations,—it is more pliant, more varied, " more picturesque.

" While yet in its infancy, ere it had lost its " ductility, it was boldly applied to edifices of every " species : while it was enriched with the accession " of extraneous ornaments and novel inventions, so " incorporated as to form a perfect amalgamation."

Essay on the Analogy between Language and Architecture.

^e To so great an extent is this absurdity carried, that we now see the same proportions employed to decorate the shop windows of a button-seller or a tripe-man, which are adapted only to edifices of the highest and most magnificent character.

decorate alike a church, a theatre, or a private residence. Nothing can evince more strongly than this, the want of taste, which is here complained of. The refined Athenians^f had so exalted an idea of the beauty and grandeur of their columns, that no private citizen was allowed to decorate his abode with these distinguished members of their orders, which were consecrated by them to the exclusive ornament of their grandest and most sacred edifices.

It is a remarkable fact, that the inhabitants of antient Greece excelled all other nations, no less in the beauty of their pro-

^f “Athens—the inventress of all the arts.”

Cicero, in his Treatise, entitled, “The Orator.”

“Taste” is elegantly defined by Mr. Hazlitt, to be “the highest degree of sensibility, or the impression “of the most cultivated and sensible minds, as “genius is the result of the highest powers of feeling “and invention.”

ductions, than in their happy perception and adaptation of all the component and relative parts. So correct was their taste, that any deviations of the nature above referred to, or any offence against costume, or attitude, or colour, or incongruities of even a more minute character, would have been instantly detected and exposed.— Their exquisite judgment in all these minutiae scarcely ever erred, insomuch that in copying the examples which remain to us of their taste, and skill, and ingenuity, the nearest approach to perfection will be almost certainly perceived in the work of him who has approached the nearest to the masterpiece of the admired archetype.

A variety of causes might be assigned for that pre-eminence in the fine arts, which so illustriously distinguished the people of Greece; such as the nature of their government, their religion, their public games,

their climate, the great encouragement given to works of art, and the constant study and display of all that is beautiful both in the human figure, and in inanimate forms.

“ In Greece, the arts, free, as the air
“ the natives breathed, and the liberty
“ those happy sons of a happy soil en-
“ joyed, grew and prospered mightily in
“ all the gay and unrestrained luxuriance
“ of unfettered liberty.”—“ The religion
“ of Greece, abounding with all the rich-
“ ness of mythology, presented the most
“ captivating and favourable subjects to
“ form and occupy the brilliant imagina-
“ tions of the poet, the painter, the archi-
“ tect, and the sculptor. Their govern-
“ ment also, the ægis of liberty, was most
“ favourable to the fine arts ; and their
“ manners and customs, the aliment of a
“ fine and delicate taste, gave them that

“ purity of style and particular graces,
“ for which the arts of Greece are so
“ pre-eminent.”—“ The multiplicity of
“ deities necessarily occasioned a want of
“ places for their worship and homage,
“ which much extended the domain of
“ the arts. They not only erected tem-
“ ples to their honour, but often dedicated
“ woods and forests to the exclusive ser-
“ vice of their deities. Two motives led
“ the Greeks to these temples—fear and
“ acknowledgment,—to implore favours,
“ and to acknowledge benefits. These
“ were generally done by offerings, consist-
“ ing of animals, spoils of vanquished
“ enemies, flowers, and fruits. The arts
“ were not backward in contributing to
“ this sentiment, for vases of bronze, of
“ silver, or of gold, tripods, crowns, altars,
“ candelabréæ, &c. were among the dedi-
“ cations of the great. The numberless
“ festivals instituted in honour of their

“ gods, also opened a vast field for the cultivation of the genius of the arts. Some of these festivals were celebrated every year ; some every five years, as the feasts of Eleusis ; some every nine years, as the Daphniphoria. The foregoing causes, and the frequency and grandeur of the public games, concurred in bringing to perfection the arts of Greece^g.” To a pitch so extraordinary was enthusiasm on these points carried, that many of the ancient sculptors have been known to pass several years upon a single statue, and on the detection of a supposed defect, have broken to pieces the work to which they had directed so much study and care, and begun their labour entirely anew^h.

^g View of the Fine Arts among the Antients.

^h “ We see nothing more perfect in their kind than the statues of Phidias.”

Cicero, in his “ Brutus.”

“ Phidias, besides the statue of Jupiter Olympius,

Many other, and no less striking instances might be given of the devotion of this refined people to whatever could add beauty and elegance to human skill and ingenuity. He indeed that would undertake to rear one of the grandest of the ancient temples, on the condition that his name might be permitted to appear on the frieze, must entertain a very exalted conception of the excellence of such works of art.

Almost every thing connected with the religion of the people of antient Greece, appears, proximately or remotely, to be in

" which nobody has rivalled, made also that of
" Minerva," &c.

Pliny, book xxxiv. chap. viii.

The simple invention of a more improved and ornamental covering for the roofs of their public buildings was rewarded by a statue.—The anecdote is thus mentioned by the Abbé Winkleman:—“ Nell’ “ isola di Nasso fu eretta una statua a certo Biza, il “ quale avea il primo pensato a formare col marmo “ pentelico le tegole, onde coprime gli edifizi.”

some way connected with the fine arts, as then practised among them, and many of their most perfect productions were made subservient thereto. On the temple of Minerva Parthenon, erected in the time of Pericles, and under the immediate eye of Phidias, the talents of the most expert workmen of that day in Athens were combined, in order to embellish and adorn this magnificent structure. From the figure of the mighty Jupiter who filled their temples, down to the tripodⁱ that rewarded the successful candidate in the choragic contests, all were alike subjects for the taste and ingenuity of the Grecian artists^j.

ⁱ Homer, when he describes the games celebrated at the funeral of Patroclus, introduces Achilles proclaiming tripods as the principal prize contended for.

^j “After the defeat of Xerxes, the Grecians, secure from invaders, and in full possession of their liberty, arrived at the height of their prosperity.

“It was then they applied themselves with the

In a school like this, and with such incentives to the display of talent, we feel less surprise at the great eminence they attained in every thing that was beautiful in art; and hence the almost implicit deference paid to the Greeks in all works of taste, is by no means a blind homage. Every thing with that refined

“greatest assiduity, and success, to the culture of
“the arts, and distinguished themselves by a pre-
“eminency and universality of genius, unknown to
“other ages and nations. During this happy period
“their most renowned artists were produced. Sculp-
“ture and architecture attained their highest degree
“of excellence at Athens, in the time of Pericles,
“when Phidias distinguished himself with such
“superior ability, that his works were considered as
“wonders, by the antients, so long as any knowledge
“or taste remained among them.

“Several artists of most distinguished talents were
“his contemporaries, after which a succession of ex-
“cellent painters, sculptors, and architects appeared,
“and these arts continued in Greece, at their highest
“perfection, till after the death of Alexander the
“Great.”

See Stuart's Preface to Vol. I.

people, was made to bend to their high ideas of art,—the excellence, therefore, which they reached, was the natural result of this untameable bias ; and the deference shewn to their judgment by the moderns, may be conceded to them as their absolute right^k.

Possessing as we now do in this country, specimens of so many of their most admired productions, and with facilities so

^k “The Greeks,” says Mr. Soane, “did not reach perfection at once; their first efforts were rude; but as they increased in knowledge and experience, they improved upon themselves, till at last they arrived at that perfection which enabled them to execute the temples of Theseus, of Minerva, and many others, eminently possessing a pure simplicity of form; combined with unity of parts, grandeur and magnificence, blended with a softened majestic depth of light and shade, such as can only be surpassed by the supreme architecture of the majestic firmament fretted with golden fire.”

great for embodying them in our own structures, the numerous deviations from good taste among us, are the less excusable. In tracing the occasion of these, various causes have been assigned; I lament to say that one of the great impediments to the general improvement which might be reasonably expected from the enterprise of our national character, may be ascribed in some degree to that spirit of party which so unhappily distinguishes, or rather disgraces our country; and which, not only in our political circles, but in private society, gives so strong and so undue a colouring to all it touches. It would be more creditable to the professors of the elegant arts, who are daily occupied in the study of all that is beautiful, and of all that is fair—to consider themselves as a band of brothers, leagued together in carrying forward those works which are designed to be the ornament and

the honour of their nation ; and, instead of entering into such petty and ephemeral disputes as would disgrace a parish vestry, to fill their minds with the hope of transmitting the lustre of their names to posterity. It is indeed matter of surprise how he, whose attention, during one part of the day, is absorbed in the study and imitation of Grecian and of Roman skill,—should lend himself, on the other, to the vilifying of a rival artist or a rival production. There is something so truly captivating in all the pursuits of the fine arts—so promotive are they of amenity—of kind and placid feeling—that he who can indulge in a narrow and a rancorous spirit towards either the person or the works of the brotherhood, is not worthy to be classed with the members of this honoured fraternity. But, superadded to the disgrace of such feelings, it should be remembered, that he who harbours them, deprives himself of a large

proportion of the actual enjoyment which his pursuits are in their own nature calculated to supply. "It seems to me," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "that the object "and intention of all the arts, is to supply "the natural imperfection of things, and "often to gratify the mind, by realising "and embodying what never existed but "in the imagination. It is allowed on all "hands, that facts and events, however "they may bind the historian, have no "dominion over the poet or the painter. "With us, history is made to bend and "conform to this great idea of art. And "why? because these arts, in their higher "province, are not addressed to the gross "senses, but to the desires of the mind, to "that spark of divinity which we have "within, impatient of being circumscribed, "and pent up by the world which is about "us¹."—"It is curious to reflect that the

¹ Discourse XIII.

“ exertions of art seem to arise from the
 “ disappointment of the human mind,
 “ sated, disgusted, and tired with the
 “ monotony of the real persons and things,
 “ which this world affords, so full of im-
 “ perfection, and accompanied with so
 “ much misery, strife, and injustice. In
 “ proportion to the serenity and goodness
 “ of the mind, it naturally turns away from
 “ such a state of things, in search of some
 “ other more graceful and consoling^{m.}”

There seems to prevail, at present, a strong spirit of opposition between the respective admirers of the Grecian and the Roman style of architectureⁿ, with a pretty

^m Barry's Letter to the Dilettanti.

ⁿ The comparative merits of the Greek and Roman structures are thus described by Mr. Elmes:—
 “ The general character of the architecture of the
 “ Greeks was superior to every thing that had been
 “ seen before, and surpasses in purity of style and

unanimous desire in both, to discountenance further attempts to restore, or to revive the antient Gothic, of which our country affords so many beautiful specimens.

Without entering with any minuteness

“ propriety of character, all that has been executed
“ since.

“ The Grecian architects never violated the inherent properties of any object to produce an artificial effect; the Romans, on the contrary, erected works, containing gross violations of the rules of architecture and pure taste. Such is the Colosseum, the theatre of Marcellus, the Pantheon, and such are their amphitheatres; structures that excite wonder and amazement, and seize upon our admiration, not for their faults, but in spite of them.”

It may be also remarked, that the arts were looked upon in a different light among the Romans to what they were among the Greeks: the latter loved and cherished them because they conferred honour and dignity on their country: the former encouraged them because they embellished theirs. In Greece, no man was disgraced by following the profession of an artist, in Rome it was commonly the business of slaves.

into the merits of these opinions, it will be more to the purpose of our inquiries to ask why we should not adopt and embody the beauties of all the three ; for that they each of them possess beauties peculiar to themselves, it would be no difficult task to evince.

In simple beauty of form, probably no people will ever rival the Grecian artists. But of the Romans it may be affirmed, although in a variety of instances they greatly degenerated from their more perfect models the Greeks^o :— Yet as many of

^o “ It has been justly observed, that long after painting, architecture, and sculpture, had flourished in Greece, these arts remained in a very imperfect state among the Italians.

“ But when the Romans had subdued Greece, they soon became enamoured of these delightful arts. They adorned their city with statues and pictures, the spoils of that conquered country, and adopting the Grecian style of architecture, they now first

their most famous buildings were constructed by Greek artists, and as they expended vast sums annually upon public edifices in different parts of the empire, in which to Grecian skill was added all that Roman wealth and magnificence could supply; it is but just to presume, that many specimens were produced, which

“ began to erect buildings of great elegance and
 “ magnificence, and the fine arts were at length
 “ assiduously cherished and cultivated at Rome.
 “ That city being now become mistress of the world,
 “ and possessed of unbounded wealth and power,
 “ became ambitious also of the utmost embellish-
 “ ments which these arts could bestow. They could
 “ not, however, though assisted by Roman munifi-
 “ cence, reascend to that height of perfection, which
 “ they had attained in Greece during her happiest
 “ periods. And it is particularly remarkable, that
 “ when the Roman authors themselves celebrate
 “ any exquisite production of art, it is the work of
 “ Phidias, Myron, Lysippus, Zeuxis, Apelles, or
 “ some artist who adorned that happy period, and
 “ not of those who had lived nearer to their own
 “ times than the age of Alexander.”

See Mr. Stuart's Preface, Athens

would be no disgrace to the age of Pericles, and to the hand of Phidias. Of these, a few, and but a few have been spared to us^p; but these are sufficient to

^p " Quoique les Romains ayent pris leur architecture des Grecs, ils n'ont peut-être pas transporté dans leurs monuments toutes les perfections que l'on trouvoit dans ceux des Grecs: et quand nous avions assurés qu'ils l'eussent fait, il reste en Italie une si petite quantité de ces monuments, par rapport à ceux qui l'ornoient, que les plus précieux nous sont peut-être échappés."

Le Roy, Discours de l'Architecture Civile, Tome Premier, p. 5.

We are informed by Pliny, book xxxiv. chap. vii. that Mummius having conquered Achaia, filled the city of Rome with statues. The Luculluses also brought many into it, but L. Mummius was the first who publicly gave reputation to foreign pictures. His triumph was adorned with Grecian pictures and statues, and he was the first who dedicated them in temples and other public buildings at Rome. It is said of Mummius, he was so ignorant in what related to the arts, that when he had taken Corinth, and was sending to Italy pictures and statues which had been brought to perfection by the greatest masters, he ordered those who had the charge of conveying them, to be threatened, *if they lost these, they should give him new ones in their stead.*

prove that Rome was not great in arms alone, but that she was only second—if second to Athens in the beauty and grandeur of her public structures, and in the majesty and sweetness of her “marble “ forms.”

Why then shall we refuse to adopt whatever is excellent in either style, without rejecting the one because it is Roman, or preferring the other for no better reason than because it is Grecian?

An indiscriminating admiration of the antients has led many to extol every antique specimen, simply because it was discovered at Athens or at Rome, not reflecting that in both cities there were many indifferent artists, and consequently many inferior productions; and indeed it has been said of Rome at the present day,

that few cities exhibit more examples of bad taste.

It is well known that all the restorers of architecture in Europe, universally adopted the Roman models; and it is one of those singular occurrences which we can scarcely tell how to account for, that the beautiful remains of Grecian architecture lay hidden and almost unknown to Europe until nearly the middle of the last century, when M. Le Roy in France^q, and Mr. Stuart in England, disclosed them to their respective nations. The publications of the former, although ushered into the world with all the advantages that splendid decoration and embellishment could

^q M. Le Roy embarked at Venice for Athens on the 5th of May, 1754; and his magnificent work, entitled “Les Ruines des plus beaux Monuments de la Grèce, &c.” was published in 1758.

supply, yet appear by no means to have excited the attention which might have been expected, either in his own country, or on the Continent in general. Indeed, in one memorable instance, they provoked a very decided opposition and hostility. Giovanni Battista Piranesi, a distinguished Venetian architect, in the year 1761, published a splendid work^r, entitled Magnifi-

^r Of this work, Mr. Stuart, no incompetent judge, has remarked that, notwithstanding its great merit, particularly in the engravings, it is to be esteemed in any other light rather than as a just delineation of Grecian architecture, of which, in the first place, the author has put all he thinks proper to exhibit into a single plate*; and in the next, he has taken his information from the incompetent specimens of Le Roy. Yet, after the beautiful Ionic capital of the Temple of Erechtheus, as well as that found at Eleusis, have been thus scandalously treated, they even there shine with a decided superiority over all the Roman Ionics, as he mistakenly calls them, they being very clearly descendants from the Grecians.

* This is a mistake, there is more than one plate of Grecian specimens.

cenza di Romani, wherein he attempts to shew the great inferiority of the Grecian to the Roman architecture^s; and, by a

It has been reported that Piranesi's work was occasioned, in great measure, by some dialogues, published in London, in 1755, in a book called "The Investigator." These containing many foolish calumnies against the antient Romans, had been interpreted to Piranesi, and inflamed his ardent spirit to this mode of vindication.

In the "Ruines de Pestum," published by him not long after, we meet with the following passage, which is almost sufficient to overturn the opinion given in his former work:—"Les voyageurs connoisseurs assurent que, par rapport à l'architecture Grecque des temples bâtis dans l'ordre Dorique, ceux de Pesto sont supérieurs en beauté à ceux qu'on voit en Sicile et dans la Grèce, et que sans se donner la peine et la fatigue de longues voyages, ceux-ci peuvent suffire pour contenter la curiosité, et qu'enfin cette grande et majestueuse architecture donne en son genre l'idée la plus parfaite de ce bel art."

" The architecture of Italy is tinged with the same romantic hues as its poetry; if not uniformly correct, yet luxuriant and sportive, wild and fantastic. And who is so exclusively, not to say pedantically, attached to the classic authors of antiquity, as not to surrender himself willingly to

juxta position of representations of the two styles, in several examples, endeavours to demonstrate the truth of his assumptions. In examining this curious volume, it may be well to notice that, in the first place, the author was an *Italian*, and was most jealous, as appears by the style of his dedications, for the glory and the renown of his native country. It may be also observed of him, that his own conceptions were of a character so vast and sublime, (as may be seen in various designs left by him,) that it is probable his mind might not be susceptible of the purer, the simpler, and the more chaste productions of the Attic genius. And it must also be recollected that Piranesi had himself never visited Greece, and all the knowledge

“ the delicious magic of Ariosto’s muse? Who so
“ frigid, as not to acknowledge the untamed splen-
“ dour, the lavish compositions of Piranesi?”

Essay on the Analogy between Language and Architecture.

acquired by him of Grecian architecture, was through the medium of the publications of M. Le Roy, whose delineations, though splendid and shewy, have been proved by Mr. Stuart to be remarkably defective in proportional admeasurements, and in some instances unfaithful in their delineations of the buildings they profess to represent.

The volumes^t of Stuart, which were published at slow and distant intervals,

^t The first volume of Mr. Stuart's Athens, was published in 1762; the second in 1787; the third in 1794; and the fourth and last volume, did not appear until 1816.

Mr. Stuart, in a paper left behind him, but published in the second volume, after his decease, writes thus:—“ M. Le Roy during a short stay at Athens, “ made some hasty sketches, from which, and the “ relations of former travellers, particularly Wheeler “ and Spon, he fabricated a publication, in which “ the antiquities that even at this day render Athens “ illustrious, are grossly misrepresented. This per-

made also less impression on the public taste in this country, than might have been hoped for; and their chaste and elegant delineations were in like manner attacked somewhat rudely, not long after

" formance was censured in our first volume, and
" some of his errors detected and exposed; he has
" highly resented this in a second edition, but
" deeming his attempts at argument, as well as
" his abuse, undeserving an answer, I shall not
" detain my readers, or trouble myself with any
" further notice of him."

M. Le Roy is not the only traveller in Greece, who has availed himself of the researches of Wheeler and Spon. Indeed so great was the reputation of these writers, that others who have visited the same place, have been satisfied in copying their descriptions. Cornelius Magni, a Parmesan gentleman, who in company with the Marquis de Nointel, was at Athens in 1672, but published his account of it in 1688; and Farelli, a Venetian advocate, whose book, entitled Attene Attica, was published in 1708, though they have both of them professionally described the antiquities of Athens, have done little more than repeat what Wheeler and Spon had already said on the same subject.

their first appearance, by one of our most eminent and distinguished architects ^u.

The pure Grecian style, therefore, has made no great progress among us; and a shewy mixture of the Roman and Palladian architecture has more generally prevailed.

It is not the design of these pages to decry either of these styles of building; but, as before hinted, to recommend the selection of the beauties of each, and to employ them in all cases where they may be introduced with advantage. In a theatre, a palace, a hall of justice, an institution for the encouragement of art, or any public and national edifice, where grandeur and beauty are required to be

^u See Sir William Chambers's Essay on Civil Architecture.

combined, these are highly appropriate, most of their decorations and enrichments are well adapted to such structures, and have been long employed in adorning them with the happiest effect.

There is, however, one very important class of buildings in this country, in which perhaps it may be allowable to prefer the Gothic^v to the Grecian or the Roman ar-

^v The following conjectures on the doubtful origin of the Gothic style, by the learned author of *The Historic Muse*, are highly curious.

" It was not invented by mathematicians, or mechanics, nor by the Goths, Anglo-Saxons, or Saracens. " It is plainly not the invention of any artist, and " still less is it Grecian or Roman. As to the Orientals, the form reached them, as we see in their temples, in the shape of the Phrygian and Median bonnet, with something perhaps of a symbolical, " and hieroglyphic allusion; it may be traced in " their architecture, just as their paganism is the " mutilated trunk or ruined remain and tumulus of " transpired revelation.

" I think further, and have no doubt that its

chitecture,—I mean in our churches and chapels; and however heretical the opinion may be accounted among artists of a particular school, I must take leave to say that I do not think, for a *Christian sanctuary, and in this country*, the Grecian or the

“origin is purely Hebraic, of the very highest antiquity: and from this form that of the mitre, the tiara, and the imperial crown, was taken. It is more graceful and majestic than any regular mathematical form. It is certainly more elegant and aspirant in its contour, having all the sprightly fugitiveness of a lambent flame. It is not appropriated only to the windows and doors, but pervades, with a simplicity and universality at once grand and enchanting, every part of the order, and, independent of associations, it possesses (whatever philosophers may say) some secret, invincible, and magical charm to our imagination.”

“The decorations, harmony, and proportions of the several parts of this magnificent fabric, (King’s College Chapel, Cambridge,) its fine painted window, and richly ornamented spreading roof, its gloom and perspective, all concur in affecting the imagination with pleasure and delight, at the same time they inspire awe and devotion.”

Bentham’s Ely.

Roman style are, *in the general*, so well adapted, as the now slighted Gothic^{w.}.

" " No other mode of building," says Mr. Murphy, " is so well calculated to excite sublime and awful " sensations."

And again, speaking of the effect of Gothic windows, he adds,— " The various colours of these windows form a happy contrast with the simple white or grey cast of the structure; and, as they obscure the church in some degree, they diffuse an appearance of solemnity, well adapted to the majesty of the place. At Batalha, about five o'clock in the evening, when the sun is opposite the great window, the effect of its painted glass is almost enchanting. At this hour, the fathers usually assemble in the choir to chaunt the evening service, whilst the myriads of variegated rays, which emanate from this beautiful window, resemble so many beams of glory playing around them. It is in vain that we attempt to restore Gothic architecture, without the admission of stained glass; especially in churches, where a degree of obscurity is perfectly consonant with the tombs, inscriptions, and other relics of mortality, we behold on every side. If to these we add the solemnity of the divine service, the awful silence, and pensive deportment of the congregation, we must admit the propriety of accompanying scenes of this

Who that looks down

“ The long drawn aisle and fretted vault,”
of an antient cathedral, and paces over its
sacred pavement,

“ Where our forefathers oftentimes met and pray’d;”
the painted windows casting over the
whole interior that sober and subdued—

“ nature with a solemn shade, since it is allowed by
“ all to be productive of more sublime ideas than
“ light.”

See Mr. Murphy's Batalha.

Mr. Hawkins remarks to the same effect, that the sombre tints reflected from stained glass windows, modified the light, and contributed to blend the whole into one mass of exquisite richness. For the general effect was consulted by the Gothic as well as the Grecian architects. Certain it is, he adds, that the Gothic churches, whatever be the peculiar manner of their era, present beauties to every eye. We cannot contemplate them without discovering a majestic air; well worthy of their destination, a knowledge of what is most profound in the science and practice of building, and a boldness of execution, of which classical antiquity furnishes no examples.

that dim, religious light, so friendly to quiet, and composed, and holy feeling.—

The following further conjectures on the origin of Gothic architecture, will be considered as novel and ingenious :—

“ The small portable ark of the tabernacle, it is “ not impossible, might have been in the shape of “ the real ark of Noah. The shape, indeed, is not “ specified in the Old Testament, where shapes and “ dimensions are given with a scrupulous exactitude; “ but this might be because it was so very obvious. “ The adopting of that shape, to represent the thing “ signified, must make the historical recollection of so “ great an event the stronger and more intimate to the “ senses. I presume, of course, that the ark of Noah, “ was in the form of a ship or boat. It was naturally “ copied in that of the ark of Moses. Now any hori- “ zontal, or perpendicular section of this form gives “ the pointed arch, and any parabolic section gives “ it in all its other varieties. Let any one for a “ moment survey a Gothic cathedral, whether of the “ heavy or of the lightest order, inside or without, “ and say whether the original conception was not “ that it was a frame-work of wood—of knee timber? “ Nor can any thing prove more the ingenuity of “ the Freemasons, who were for so long a time the “ itinerant architects of Europe, than that they should “ have been able to imitate so frail a texture, so “ reticulated a frame, of rib-work, of such capacity, “ loftiness, and delicacy, in stone.”

Studies of the Historic Muse.

Who, let me ask, but in such a scene,
must find awakened in his bosom some of
those higher and better feelings, that

“ To mortals given,
“ Have less of earth in them than heaven ?”

I cannot pretend to answer for the feelings of others, but I well remember my own sensations, when, some years ago, at Rome it was my daily custom to repair to the church of St. Peter's, without question the grandest religious edifice of modern times. So struck was I with its sublimity, that I never failed to pass, during every day, some hours in this magnificent church. Instead, however, of being impressed with that feeling of awful, and as it were overpowering reverence which would be most accordant to the character of a Christian temple;—I confess my imagination was occupied with images of a very different kind,—with ideas of the grandeur of the old Romans, with the greatness of

their achievements, and the glory of their triumphs^x; and, as I gazed on the superb vault, and the vast area below, these and many of the decorations, and the various mural and other ornaments, conspired to fix and to strengthen this primary idea.

Far different are the sensations called forth in one of our antient Gothic cathedrals^y. Here, though impressed with

^x The Greek and Roman temples were constructed in the gayest style of architecture; they were the rendezvous of public thanksgivings and rejoicings, not omitting triumphal processions, accompanied with music, feasting, and dancing.

^y “On entering a Gothic cathedral, from the commencement of the nave to the termination at the altar, one magnificent avenue is presented to the view, nobly terminating in one object, and that including all that can most powerfully affect the internal senses, the imagination, and the heart.”

Theory on the Classification of Beauty and Deformity,
by Mary-Anne Schimmelpenninck.

all that is grand, yet this also is mingled with all that is holy; for these edifices have never been dedicated to other than religious uses.

The very style and character of their construction, remind the attentive observer of their sacred origin, and their sacred destination. The pillars of tall and clustering palm trees^z, closing in a magnificent vault of their spreading branches, the capitals crowned with leaves and flowers of plants, indigenous in Palestine, the mural and other ornaments taken from

" " In the scripture account of the temple of
" Solomon, frequent mention is made of palm trees;
" their branches and leaves introduced as embellish-
" ments in various parts of the building: and in
" erections constructed for a similar purpose, there
" is manifestly a singular propriety in employing
" the same kinds of ornaments and decorations.
" One reason for their original use might probably
" have been, that the architecture of every country

scripture subjects, such as the olive and palm branch, the crown of thorns and the cross, the cherub faces, now and then peeping forth from the enriched moulding, or cornice,—all these conspire to fix the heart on subjects, to which every Christian will own a kindred alliance.

Hence, though no one can be a more ardent admirer of the pure Greek and Roman architecture, yet, I must repeat that, in the *religious edifices of this country*, I should not at all regret to witness

" must always bear some relation to the forms
" of the materials for building which that country
" affords. Now no trees of any bulk for timber
" were to be found in the Holy Land, for the soil
" would only supply the palm tree, the stem of
" which was slender in its girt, tall in its height,
" and equal, without either increase or diminution
" of size, all the way up to the very boughs."

See Hawkins's History of Gothic Architecture.

a *partial* revival of the neglected Gothic, with its accompaniments of richly decorated and painted windows, its long ailes, and clustered columns. Many of our modern and newly erected churches^a,

^a On the front of the church, recently erected in the New Street facing Carlton Palace, are represented, in relief, the bull's heads and flower wreaths, the common ornaments of a Greek or Roman frieze; but which, however, appropriate as embellishments to a Pagan temple, are wholly out of place in a Christian sanctuary. This is one of those striking instances of incongruity, and misapplication, which the refined taste of an Athenian artist would scarcely have fallen into. Sir Christopher Wren, in the exterior decorations of his great work, (St. Paul's Cathedral,) displayed a more correct taste; he has there studded the pediments of the windows, with cherub heads, ornamented by occasional wreaths of palm and olive branches.

Many years ago, in one of his discourses to the students of the Royal Academy, the late President warned them against the false taste above alluded to.

"Have you never beheld," says he "in the porticoes of palaces, public halls, or places of amusement, the skins of animals devoted to the rites of the Pagan religion, or vases consecrated

resemble much more a theatre, than a place designed for Christian worship; the ornaments are often wholly of a Pagan character; the colouring and decorations of the interior, are shewy and glaring;

“ to the ashes of the dead, or the tears of the living? Violations of sense and character, in this respect, are daily committed. We might with as much propriety, adorn the friezes of our palaces and theatres, with the skulls and cross thigh bones of the human figure, which are the emblems of death, in every country throughout modern Europe.”

The idea of fitness should above all things be attended to; for this reason, the antients carefully attended to the suitableness of a column to its edifice, and of the ornament to their columns.

“ The Ionic column had not been found in the temple of Diana, but that the Doric was less adapted to that edifice; and, in the temple of Venus, even the Ionic had been improperly placed. Cariatic columns, in any temple, would have been ridiculous; as it would have been introducing monuments of vengeance into an asylum of mercy.”

See Dr. Aldrich's Elements of Civil Architecture.

and the light, instead of being subdued and kept down to a composed and quiet tone, is frequently dazzling and overpowering, so that almost any other feelings than those of Christian awe and reverence are excited, on entering such a structure.

But whatever be the style adopted in our sacred buildings, whether Grecian, Roman, or Gothic, no plea can be admitted for the unsightly and mis-shapen structures, which have of late years arisen to disfigure our country. Whether we look on the external form, or examine the interior decorations, most of them will be found lamentably deficient in taste, and the common proprieties; and, of the numerous chapels of various kinds, which have been erected in different parts of the kingdom, it has been very truly remarked, “that there is not one, which ‘has the slightest pretensions to archi-

" tectural merit, even among those, in
 " the construction of which, economy
 " has not been the first consideration."

Much diversity of opinion prevails in the present day, as to the form and character of the residences of our nobility and opulent gentry^b, and much confusion has arisen from a prevalence of the

^b " In some of our extensive domains " says Mr. Dallaway, " dedicated to picturesque beauty, " where nature has been most indulgent, I have " been disappointed by observing numerous structures of high pretension as to expense, so ill " suited to the genius of the place. We abound " in ecclesiastical and military ruins, which are truly " inimitable, and lose all effect when attempted upon " a scale of inferior dimensions. Why are we so " ambitious of multiplying copies, in which all " character is sunk in such specimens ? "

Observations on English Architecture, by the Rev. James Dallaway.

Dr. Aldrich, the well known author of Elements of Civil Architecture, speaks in terms of uniform eulogium of the Roman architecture, as revised by Palladio :—" We are much indebted to Palladio

false taste above hinted at, in our public edifices.

Many attempts have been made, within the last thirty or forty years, to construct dwellings in the Gothic style; but these have not often succeeded; indeed, our earliest impressions are opposed to the attempt; for however this style of building may and does associate itself, with our ideas of sacred, and solemn, and reverent feeling, it does not appear to harmonize with home-like comfort and hilarity. The form of its structure is that of a church, the shape of the windows, and the painted or stained glass, so essential to the Gothic character, and which casts so sweet a repose over the interior of a Gothic church,

" for his beautiful selections from the remains of
" antient artists, which he has made with so much
" taste, and for the rules formed in them, which
" he has laid down with equal knowledge and
" judgment."

all concur to remind us of a religious sanctuary, rather than a habitation for domestic enjoyment. There is no antient mansion of our nobility remaining, which exhibits any example of such a house^c. The oldest houses, on a scale of any extent, are of the age of Queen Elizabeth, and these display a totally different form. From hence it may be fairly inferred, that our ancestors confined this style of building wholly to religious uses.

^c “The architect who desires to erect a mansion in the style of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, is obliged to have recourse to the sacred buildings of those ages, to select such parts as appear most suitable to his purpose; to arrange them so as to form a tolerable whole: and, if no great solecism is discernible, he may be allowed to have succeeded as far as it was possible to succeed, when, with his imagination warmed with the splendid and lavish decoration of some antient pile, he was under the necessity of applying and misapplying its various details, to the embellishment of boudoirs and drawing rooms.”

Essay on the Analogy between Language and Architecture.

Perhaps, however, one of the greatest impediments to the introduction of this style for a house, has arisen from there being no example of its details being carried throughout in such a building; and thus the odious mixture of the Grecian and Gothic, which is so disgusting. I do not recollect an instance where the Gothic character has been preserved, both in the interior and exterior, of any modern residence, with the single exception of Strawberry Hill; and indeed it would require much taste and judgment, to select and apply all the appropriate decorations; but from the vast number of ornamental specimens, collected of late years from Gothic buildings, this would be by no means so difficult as perhaps at first supposed, and the effect of the whole might be rendered exceedingly striking.

A good deal of whimsicality has been

shewn of late, in the country houses of many of our opulent gentry, in building what is called cottage residences; and some pains have been taken to torture the term *cottage* out of its legitimate meaning, in order that it may fit the purpose of the admirers of this style. Dr. Johnson, no despicable authority, calls a cottage, "a hut, or mean habitation;" and, accordingly, our builders in this style come as near to this appearance as possible, by making the roof of thatch, supporting the entrance on rough posts, to resemble the trunks of trees, with other similar hut-like appendages. We no sooner enter this hut, however, than we find ourselves perhaps, in a handsome hall, leading to elegant apartments, decorated with silk hangings, and filled with costly furniture. This is in bad taste, and may be looked on as a trick, or deception,

and a deception of the poorest kind. Many are the tasteful designs, which might be given for a gentleman's dwelling in the country, not involving much of either exterior shew or expense, but possessing all the beauty of a rural retreat; without exhibiting the odious anomaly above described. The residence of an English gentleman should proclaim itself, by the style of its elevation, to be, what it really is, and the extent, and general aspect of the building ought, of course, to be proportioned to the rank, or the opulence of the inhabitant. There is one leading idea, which ought ever to be kept in view, namely, that a private house being built, not for others, but for the use and comfort of the immediate occupant and proprietor, the first and primary consideration ought, on every occasion, to be his particular pleasure and conveni-

ence, in preference to every other object^d. This rule, however, has been too frequently made to bend to the external appearance, as if the principal design were to render the house, more attractive to the passing traveller, than to the actual possessor. To the producing some desired symmetry in the front, to connect the offices with the centre, to put forth a shivering

^d Several years ago, a late architect, of some note, who happened to be employed in *Gothicizing* the neighbouring parish church, was consulted by a friend of mine, upon the propriety of lowering the windows in his dining room, so as to afford a view of his lawn, and of some beautiful forest scenery, beyond his own grounds. The architect said, he could by no means advise the step—it would so disturb the proportions of the room, a common dining room, and he would, therefore, not hazard his *reputation* on such an alteration! Being myself on a visit at the house not long afterwards, I ventured to risk my *whole credit* on the proposed improvement; which was accordingly adopted, upon the plan then furnished, to the great pleasure and satisfaction of all concerned.

colonnade, or to promote some other purpose of architectural display,—the comfort of many of the best houses in the country has sometimes been injudiciously sacrificed.

The architect who is required to furnish designs for a house, should constantly bear in mind that he is planning a building for human habitation; his design ought, therefore, to preserve throughout this character; and although in houses of the highest class, he may avail of some of the grandest members of the antient orders, yet these should appear only as accessory, not as principals in the structure; otherwise, although he may succeed in raising beautiful temples, he will totally fail in all the features of a private dwelling.

It may be alleged, perhaps, that such a plan, if adopted, would lower the dig-

nified character of our larger houses ; to which I reply, that an able architect would entertain no apprehensions of this nature ; his taste would be able to select materials for his purpose of the most exquisite kind, without resorting, unless for purposes of the highest order, to so expensive and so solemn an appendage, as the grand and magnificent portico of the antient temples.

Some of our more stately mansions have a near resemblance to the form of Grecian temples ; and hence, though highly beautiful as specimens of architectural taste, there is frequently an unfitness, an ill adaption in the character of their structure, to the purposes of habitation^e.

^e “ The noble simplicity of the temples of the
“ Greeks and Romans, beautiful as they are in

Next to the external elevation of the houses of the opulent, may be noticed all the interior arrangements and decorations, in which is the fairest and most ample scope for taste to display itself.

In the interior of many of the houses of our nobility, the forms of the Roman or Italian orders have been introduced, not only into the halls and galleries, but have been carried into the apartments of minor importance, where the doors and the chimney-pieces, &c., are crowned with pediments and mouldings, in a style altogether too heavy and encumbered. This mode of ornament was frequently used by Kent and the architects of that

“themselves, and characteristic of their intent, can
“not be transferred to private buildings, without
“losing their proper effect, and producing, when so
“applied, a sombre and gloomy appearance.”

See Mr. Soane's Lectures on Architecture.

day, copied probably from Inigo Jones, and which came further recommended to public attention, by the work of Piranesi, entitled, “Diversi Maniere d’adornarer i ‘camieri ed altre parti d’egli Edifizi,” wherein he has, in a variety of specimens, endeavoured to adapt and apply many of the antient architectural members, to objects in which the antients themselves, rarely, if ever applied them; for, in the interior of their dwellings, they appear to have used a lighter and more fantastic style of decoration, as may be seen by the engravings from the apartments of the houses which have been excavated at Herculaneum and Pompeia.

But not in the fittings up and enrichments only—or in the style and disposal of the apartments—may taste be advantageously employed; but in every article of orna-

mental furniture, from the most costly vase, down to the footstool, or the fire screen.

If these were selected with taste, and disposed with judgment, by some one competent thereto, every apartment in the houses of our nobility, might be made a receptacle of Grecian beauty and art, and the elegant owner might enjoy the luxury, of stepping from room to room, surrounded by none but finished models of the productions of the best periods of Grecian and Roman art.

In many instances we already perceive a considerable advance towards a better taste than formerly, in the style and decorations of our large houses; but in the far greater number of those, which I have hitherto visited, I must take leave to remark, there is much that might yet be greatly

improved. To cite particular instances would be highly indecorous and unbecoming; but perhaps it may be allowable to specify some of the more prominent incongruities often met with.

Sometimes, for example, the entrance hall, instead of being kept down in its tone of colour and decoration, is so heightened with artificial verd antique columns, gilt capitals, and gilt cornices, &c., that no other part of the house can vie with it^f. In other cases, the furniture

^f " Ce qui est excellent dans un lieu, ne convient pas à un autre: le tout depend de mettre chaque chose à sa place, et de varier de stile et de manière selon les sujets et les lieux."

Coypel's Discourses.

Being once called to a place of this description, where the entrance hall was the most enriched and shewy part of the mansion,—where verd antique pilasters strove with columns of yellow marble (both nicely painted to resemble these costly materials) to

is ill adapted to the character of the apartment, or it is crowded so full by the upholsterer, that it resembles nothing so much as his own warehouse. It sometimes occurs that the painter has so daubed the ceiling, or the walls, with strong and glaring colours, that the soft and half-faded touches of the old masters, which hang round them, are utterly put out of countenance, and their beauty destroyed altogether.

strike the eye of the visitant, the first thing that I recommended, as an improvement, was to tone down these pillars and pilasters to a modest stone colour, in order that the other parts of the house, which were in excellent taste, might stand a chance of some consideration, being, as the case then stood, altogether eclipsed by the brilliant and imposing effect of the entrance hall.

The respected owner of the mansion was a man of good sense and good taste, and instantly acknowledged the propriety of the proposed alteration, and would have adopted it without hesitation, but for some private reasons, which prevailed against his better judgment.

In many houses, the principal apartments are converted into magazines of antique sculpture: instances might be cited, where not only the larger rooms, but even the halls and the staircases, have been thus filled, thereby lowering the character of a nobleman's mansion, to that of a statuary's repository. A gallery allotted to the express purpose of containing these specimens of antient art, would not only be more appropriate, but would exhibit them to much greater advantage, and would allow the connoisseur an opportunity to examine them more distinctly.

The bad taste shewn in the higher branches of furniture, induced a gentleman^s of very distinguished taste, some

^s Thomas Hope, Esq., Author of “Costume of ‘the Antients,’ 2 vols. 8vo.; and, “Designs for ‘Household Furniture,’ &c., 1 vol. folio.

years ago, to give designs for various articles, after the purest antique forms, which were executed for his own residence from these designs; but this attempt at improvement was not followed by the success that might have been expected.

It is surprising, in the present advanced state of the arts in this country, that, in many of our manufactories, where a correct taste^h is more especially required, so little attention has been paid to the forms of their manufactures. “The influence of

^h “ The Greek costume is the perfection of elegance in dress; no nation ever equalled, much less excelled it; and it is observable, that as other people advance in refinement and taste, they adopt the Grecian modes in those circles where elegance and beautiful display can be admitted. In their vases, candelabri, and utensils of every kind, with their decorative embellishments, are beheld the excursions of an elevated fancy, subjected, at the same time, to the regulations of propriety. Nothing is

“ taste,” it has been justly observed by the late President, Mr. West, “ extending itself to all branches of manufactory, will meet the higher and more wealthy orders, whose accomplished minds will feel and relish the increase of elegance diffused over their domestic retirements. For never have the arts taken, and never will they take root in any country, until the people of that country generally feel and understand their constitutional elegance, and the refinement of domestic comforts which they spread around them. That there has long prevailed a lamentable deficiency of taste in these branches in England, no one will dispute.” Who

“ introduced that can offend by improper association, nothing for mere shew; but every ingenious device conduces to the beauty of the composition, and every figure in pictorial representations seems necessary to their perfection.”

Stanley's Essay on Grecian Architecture.

ever observed, in the Derbyshire spar, for instance, a single specimen that approached at all near to the form of a Greek or Roman vase, and, until lately, our finer china, although exquisite in beauty of colour; and costly decoration and finish, yet has not in the remotest degree attempted to rival the beauty of the antique shape; but a cup, and a saucer, and a plate, and a vase, have generally preserved the tasteless figure of the country, China, from whence they were originally copied and imported.

Hence many of the houses of our nobility and gentry exhibit specimens of French art, which might be executed in a more perfect style by the artists of our own country. He, therefore, that contributes to the improvement and extension of the fine arts at home, may have the satisfaction to reflect that, whilst he is enlarging his own sphere of personal gratification, he is

also most essentially contributing to the substantial benefit and welfare of the community of which he is a memberⁱ. In our

ⁱ This opinion has received the fullest confirmation from the Committee on the Elgin Marbles, whose judgment on this subject is so important, that the words which close their report can never be too frequently repeated:—“ Your Committee cannot dismiss this interesting subject without submitting “ to the attentive consideration of the House, how “ highly the cultivation of the fine arts has contributed to the reputation, character and dignity of “ every government by which they have been encouraged; and how intimately they are connected “ with the advancement of every thing valuable in “ science, literature, and philosophy. In contemplating the importance and splendour to which so small a republic as Athens rose, by its genius and energy of her citizens, exerted in the path of such studies, it is impossible to overlook how transient the memory and fame of extended empires, and of mighty conquerors are, in comparison of those who have rendered inconsiderable states eminent, and immortalised their own names by these pursuits. But if it be true, as we learn from history and experience, that free governments afford a soil most suitable to the production of native talent, to the

present state of refinement we are no longer to be told that the arts which embellish life are a superfluity, which may without injury, be either countenanced or depressed; for these now enter vitally into our national character, and constitute a portion of our glory; and I trust the day is not far distant, when, instead of going to France, or to Italy, or even to Greece, for what is perfect in art, foreigners of different countries will repair to England to study

"maturity of the powers of the human mind, and to
"the growth of every species of excellence, by
"opening to merit the prospect of reward and dis-
"tinction, no country can be better adapted than
"our own to afford an honourable asylum to these
"ornaments of the school of Phidias, and of the
"administration of Pericles; where, secure from
"further injury and degradation, they may receive
"that admiration and homage to which they are
"entitled, and serve in return as models and examples
"to those, who, by knowing how to revere and
"appreciate them, may learn first to imitate, and
"ultimately to rival them."—*March 25, 1816.*

painting, and architecture, and sculpture, and to procure all that is tasteful and elegant in decorative forms.

Nearly connected with the style and character of the dwellings of opulence, may be considered the scenery, by which these are surrounded, and the appropriate mode of decorating such scenery.

Since the stiff and formal plans of Le Notre^j, and the improvers of his time, two

^j “ Le Notre, the architect of the groves and
“ grottoes at Versailles, came hither on a mission to
“ improve our taste. He planted St. James’s and
“ Greenwich Parks, no great monuments of his in-
“ vention.

“ Improvements had gone on, till London and
“ Wise had stocked our gardens with giants, animals,
“ monsters, coats of arms, and mottoes, in yew, box,
“ and holly. Absurdity could go no further, and
“ the tide turned. At length appeared Kent, painter
“ enough to taste the charms of landscape, bold and

other styles have arisen ; the one recommending the picturesque and the magnificent, and leaving our garden scenery almost entirely to nature ; the other, a dressed and artificial system, scarcely less uniform, though in an opposite style, than that of Le Notre, which has prevailed pretty generally from the time of Kent and of Browne, to the present day.

Perhaps in this, as in most other cases of extremes, the medium path may be most consistent, both with good taste and good sense. A garden, by which I mean

“opiniative enough to dare and to dictate, and born
“with a genius to strike out a great system from the
“twilight of imperfect essays: he was neither without
“assistance nor faults. Mr. Pope undoubtedly
“contributed to form his taste. The design of the
“Prince of Wales’s garden, at Carlton House, was
“evidently borrowed from the Poet’s at Twicken-
“ham.”

Lord Orford’s History of Modern Gardening.

to be understood, the ground immediately adjoining the house, ought certainly not to exhibit any of the wildness of uncultivated nature, but to partake of the neatness and the artificial character of the building to which it appertains; whilst the park, and the most distant parts may be permitted to retain much of their natural beauty and wildness, and all that intricacy and picturesqueness in the grouping of their trees, &c., so happily set forth in the interesting volumes of Mr. Price, who probably has paid more attention to the different effects, both of embellished and of natural landscape, than any other writer upon the subject.

One of the prevailing errors in landscape gardening, by which terms the embellishment of rural scenery has been designated, appears to have arisen from not paying sufficient attention to the peculiar charac-

ter of the spot on which it is employed, in adopting one uniform system, and pursuing this in all situations, and under all circumstances.

Thus Brown clumped and belted every thing, and some of our late improvers have, upon a similar principle, cut away, and full dressed, in their own particular fashion, every scene they have been called to *improve*. Instead of looking round upon nature with a painter's or a poet's eye, and studying the effects^k of beautiful

^k "He who can best select the happiest compositions from the general mass of objects, and knows the principles on which he makes those selections, must also be the best qualified to arrange the connexions throughout an extensive scene. He likewise must be the most competent judge where, and in what degree, some inferior beauties should be sacrificed, in order to give greater effect to those of a higher order."

Essays on the Picturesque, by Uvedale Price, Esq.

combinations, and contrasts, a particular plan or fashion has been too commonly followed, to the injury, and sometimes the destruction, of the character of the spot it was intended to adorn.

In mountain or forest scenery, the great dread of the improver ought to be, lest he should mar a single feature in such majestic wildness. In places of this description, therefore, every touch should be given with the utmost caution, and the aim ought to be, how best to display the actually existing beauties, rather than to exhibit any of the intrusive approaches of art¹.

¹ "It appears to me that the neglect which prevails in the works of modern improvers, of all that is picturesque, is owing to their exclusive attention to high polish and flowing lines; the charms of which they are so engrossed in contemplating, that they overlook two of the most fruitful sources of

In scenes, however, of a less determinate character, the hand of a judicious improver may be employed to great advantage; but here, and in all cases whatsoever, the first care must be to consider attentively *the genius of the place*, to examine its best and its worst features, to study all its undulations, the wood and the water, the exposed and the hidden parts, and from these to combine his landscape.

How far the hand of art may be permitted to appear in such creations, has been correctly defined in the following passage, by a very elegant writer on Taste. “The mind,” says Mr. Knight, “requires propriety in every thing; that is, it

“human pleasure; the first, that great and universal
“source of pleasure, *variety*, the power which is
“independent of beauty, but without which beauty
“itself soon ceases to please; the second, *intricacy*.[”]

Essays on the Picturesque.

“ requires that those properties, the ideas
“ of which it has been invariably habi-
“ tuated to associate, should be associated
“ in reality, otherwise the considerations
“ will appear to be unnatural, incoherent,
“ or absurd. For this reason we require
“ immediately adjoining the dwellings of
“ opulence and luxury, that every thing
“ should assume its character; and not
“ only be, but appear to be dressed and
“ cultivated. In such situations, neat
“ gravel walks, mown turf, flowering
“ plants and shrubs, trained and dis-
“ tributed by art, are perfectly in cha-
“ racter; although if the same building
“ were abandoned, and in ruins, we should,
“ on the same principle of consistency
“ and propriety, require neglected, rugged
“ lanes, and wild, uncultivated thickets,
“ which are in themselves more pleasing,
“ both to the eye and the imagination, but
“ unfit arrangements for objects, not only

“ originally produced by art, but in which
 “ art is constantly employed and exhibited.
 “ This sort of neatness should, on the
 “ same principle, be confined to the imme-
 “ diate appendages of the house, that is,
 “ to the grounds which are so connected
 “ with it, as to appear necessary adjuncts
 “ to the dwelling, and therefore to be
 “ under the influence of the same cha-
 “ racter, which is a character of art^m. ”

The sceneryⁿ which surrounds an abbey
 or a castle, should partake in some degree
 of the antient grandeur of the place,—

^m Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste,
by Richard Payne Knight, Esq.

ⁿ “ Though it is only in accompanying grand and
“ magnificent buildings, that the Italian garden has
“ its full effect; yet as there are numberless gradations
“ in the style and character of the buildings, from
“ the palace or the antient castle, to the plainest and
“ the simplest dwelling-house; so, different styles of
“ architectural, or at least artificial accompaniments,

thus, if a lofty terrace encircled the building, it ought, either in whole or in part, to be permitted to retain its situation. If walks are to be laid out near the windows, they ought to be exceedingly broad, so as to present an air of grandeur, somewhat in unison with the majestic features of the principal structure. If the walls are in part covered with ivy^o, not a leaf of this sacred covering should be dis-

“ might, though more sparingly, be made use of in
“ those lower degrees, without having our gardens
“ reduced to mere grass and shrubs.”

Essays on the Picturesque.

• Some caution ought to be used that the whole of the building be not covered, otherwise the form and character may be thereby altogether annihilated. Those who have recently seen the beautiful little church, at Chinkford, in Essex, will know what is here meant. This church which was, some years ago, a most picturesque object, is now so entirely smothered with the ivy which encloses it, that the form and outline of the structure are completely hidden and lost.

turbed; and, if it be wholly destitute of this appropriate ornament, some of the most beautiful creepers might, with great advantage, be trained to climb its venerable sides.

But it is not in scenes such as these, that the skill and the taste of the improver are principally shewn; for he has here little more to do than to watch the beauties, which the hand of nature has thrown in his path, and to give to these the greatest possible effect. As, however, it is not the lot of many to possess domains, such as those of Mr. Knight and Mr. Price, to call the mountain and the forest their own, to find in their paternal demesnes, those bewitching landscapes, in which art has little more to do than to keep aloof; the owner of less favoured spots may avail of the assistance of the improver with the greatest benefit,—and

it is in these instances, where the country to be embellished is an unvarying flat, where there are no breaks, no inequalities, or woods, to vary the monotony of the scenery,—it is here that the skill of the improver will be at once displayed, or the want of it exposed,—and here he who is endowed with a high and cultivated taste, so far from shrinking from a difficulty, which would discourage the mere mechanical practitioner, would delight in such an opportunity of embodying his own magic conceptions, and of giving to his beautiful creations a “local habitation and a name.” He will look on the naked and unadorned spot, with feelings akin to those of a painter on looking upon his prepared canvas, with his brushes, and his easel, and his colours ready, and himself anxious to give existence to the creations of his richly furnished fancy. And I do not hesitate to say, that the

hand of taste thus employed, even among scenes the most sterile and unpromising, may produce effects very delightful, may call forth roses in the desert, and “ make ‘the barren wilderness to smile.’”

It has been well remarked, in one of the most elegant essays that was ever written on any practical subject, that “the art of embellishing rural scenery, “in the perfection to which it has been “lately brought in England^p, is entitled “to a place of considerable rank among “the liberal arts. It is as superior to “landscape painting as a reality to a “representation : it is an exertion of fancy,

^p “We have given,” says Mr. Walpole, “the true model of gardening to the world, let other countries mimic or corrupt our taste; but let it reign here on its verdant throne, original by its elegant simplicity, and proud of no other art than that of softening nature’s harshnesses, and copying her graceful touch.”

“ a subject for taste; and being released
“ now from the restraints of regularity,
“ and enlarged beyond the purposes of
“ domestic convenience, the most beau-
“ tiful, the most simple, the most noble
“ scenes of nature, are all within its pro-
“ vince: its business is to discover and
“ to shew all the advantages of the place
“ upon which it is employed, to supply its
“ defects, to correct its faults, and to improve
“ its beauties. For all these operations, the
“ objects of nature are the only materials.
“ The first inquiry therefore must be, into
“ the means by which those effects are
“ attained in nature, which are to be
“ produced, and those properties in the
“ objects of nature, which should deter-
“ mine in the choice and arrangement
“ of them.”

^a See Mr. Wheatley's Observations on Landscape Gardening.

It is not in widely extended districts only, that this art may be applied with success, the limited adjuncts of more private and confined dwellings may be made creations of great sweetness, in the hands of a judicious improver, and a single acre of ground may be so disposed as to display beauties of the most fascinating character. It is therefore to be regretted, that so many examples occur among our more private home-scenes, in which no attention has been paid to *effect* in the disposal of the landscape.

Large sums are oftentimes expended in destroying the natural advantages of scenery, such as levelling uneven ground, forming boundaries to artificial water, and other works of a similar nature, the one half of which, judiciously applied, might have produced landscapes of great interest.

One of the greatest difficulties in embellished landscape is found in the forming of artificial water; but, if well managed, there is nothing within the range of the improver's art, which affords a better opportunity for the display of all its beauties.

The enrichment and diversifying the banks of artificial rivers; but more especially the forming and decorating of lake scenery, will be one of his most delightful occupations; and he will there be oftentimes able to produce the happiest effects. When it is considered how much of picturesque beauty may be obtained by an attention to the minute characters of such scenery, to gentle swells—small and sudden projections—the spreading roots of trees—tufts of wild flowers—and other accidental breaks, it is surprising that our island should exhibit, in so many parts of it, such tame and hideous imitations of lakes and rivers,

where all these embellishments, instead of being solicited and encouraged, appear to have been either purposely avoided, or if they did originally exist, have been destroyed, to give place to that unvarying and monotonous tameness, so disgusting to the eye of every tasteful observer^r.

^r How pathetically does Mr. Price describe, in the following passage, the feelings of a person on wandering over such a scene:—“ It is probable that many “ an English gentleman may have felt deep regret, “ when Mr. Brown had metamorphosed some charm- “ ing trout stream into a piece of water ; and that “ many a-time afterwards, when, disgusted with its “ glare and formality, he has been plodding along its “ naked banks, he may have thought how beautifully “ fringed those of his little brook once had been ; how “ it sometimes ran rapidly over the stones and shallows, “ and sometimes, in a narrow channel, stole silently “ beneath the over-hanging boughs. Many rich, “ natural groups of trees he might remember, now “ thinned and rounded into clumps ; many seques- “ tered thickets, which he had loved when a boy, “ now all open and exposed, without shade or va- “ riety ; and all these sacrifices made, not to his own “ taste, but to the fashion of the day.”

The principle of improving landscape^s by the study of the works of the great masters in another art ; namely, that of painting, which has been so ably enforced by the author of " Essays on the " Picturesque," is a principle which I can by no means agree with, in a way so

" " Nature," says Mr. Marshall, " scarcely knows " the thing mankind calls a *landscape*. The land- " scape painter, seldom, if ever, finds it perfected to " his hands ; some additions or alterations are almost " always wanted. Every man who has made his " observations upon natural scenery, knows that the " mistletoe of the oak occurs almost as often as a " perfectly natural landscape, and to attempt to make " up artificial landscape upon every occasion is un- " natural and absurd."

Mr. Alison, in his Essays on Taste, has judiciously remarked, that the great source of the superiority of the productions of landscape gardening to the original scene in nature, consists, in the purity and harmony of its composition, in the power which the artist enjoys, to remove from his landscape whatever is hostile to its effect, or unsuited to its character, and by selecting only such circumstances as accord with the general expression of the scene.

unqualified as there recommended. I am quite prepared to admit that many of the landscapes of Claude, might occasionally afford assistance to some of the scenes, which the improver may be called to decorate; but this can be by no means allowed as a *general principle*; for it frequently happens, that those objects which would form a very beautiful combination in a picture, would be almost disgusting in real landscape, and *vice versa*.

Mr. Gilpin, who is no mean authority on such a subject, appears in the following passages to have defined correctly the distinct province and capabilities of the two arts:—“ A piece of Palladian architecture, may be elegant in the last degree. The proportion of its parts, the propriety of its ornaments, and the symmetry of the whole, may be highly pleasing. But, if we introduce it in a

“ picture, it immediately becomes a formal
“ object, and ceases to please. Should
“ we wish to give it picturesque beauty,
“ we must use the mallet instead of the
“ chisel: we must beat down one half
“ of it, deface the other, and throw the
“ mutilated members around in heaps.
“ In short, from a smooth building, we
“ must turn it into a rough ruin. No
“ painter, who had the choice of the
“ two objects, would hesitate which to
“ chuse.”

Again; “ Why does an elegant piece
“ of garden ground, make no figure on
“ canvas? The shape is pleasing; the
“ combination of the objects harmonious;
“ and the winding of the walk, in the
“ very line of beauty. All this is true;
“ but the *smoothness* of the whole, though
“ right, and as it should be, in *nature*, offends
“ in *picture*. Turn the lawn into a piece

" of broken ground ; plant rugged oaks,
" instead of flowering shrubs ; break the
" edge of the walk ; give it the rudeness
" of a road ; mark it with wheel tracks ;
" and scatter around a few stones and brush-
" wood ; in a word, instead of making
" the whole smooth, make it rough, and
" you make it also picturesque."

Instead, then, of sending the improver of natural landscape, to the painter for instruction, let him go to nature herself, and study, with intense application, her beautiful varieties wherever they may be traced. Instead of repairing to the artist's painting room, let him be found wandering amidst forests, and groves, and rocks, and lakes, in green and quiet lanes, in open glades, among tufts of wild flowers. Here he will study to advantage, the effect of different shrubs and trees, of light and shadow, of morning and of evening

tints, on ground, on water, on buildings; and from these he will perfect his taste in forming those beautiful combinations, which no paintings can hope to rival.

One of the leading materials, which nature furnishes in the composition of her scenes, is wood; and, in the judicious disposal of shrubs and trees, lies much of the skill of the improver. In this, it is to be lamented, that fashion too frequently interferes, so as, in some cases, to destroy what was in itself highly pleasing. At one time, it is the fashion to lay open the whole scene, and to see every thing; to accomplish this, how many beautiful shrubberies have been rudely torn up^t, and

^t Too great caution cannot be used in the removal of trees, and it is a good rule, unless they be manifestly a blemish, by occasioning damps and obvious disfigurement, to remain in a place twelve months, before taking up a full-grown tree, their removal

how many stately trees levelled to the ground. At another time, concealment is the prevailing mode, and the house is to be enclosed in the midst of a wood, the planter is then required to shut out, perhaps, one of the finest prospects in the country, and thus to render dull and unhealthy, what was before cheerful, and elegant, and airy.

If the decorating of landscape scenery, may be allowed to be reckoned among

leaves a gap so large and unlooked for, as sometimes greatly to disfigure the landscape. Other considerations, likewise, justly interfere with the destinies of old trees, which ought to be scrupulously attended to. An antient oak or elm, though standing a little in the way of a prospect, was perhaps the favourite tree under which a beloved parent delighted to sit—or was planted by the hand of a distant or departed friend,—these are sacred considerations and feelings which ought ever to be respected: and no advantage, procured at the expense of such a sacrifice, could at all compensate the loss of so interesting a memorial.

the liberal arts, and I have long wished to see it hold that situation, the dominion of fashion ought then to be here no longer recognised.

True taste, in all the higher departments of art, submits to no fashions^u, is of no party, has no country, and yields to no ephemeral authorities, but pursues its quiet course, wholly independent of them, and sometimes in opposition to them all.

On the introduction of ornamental buildings or sculpture into embellished landscape, although to be at all times sparingly admitted; yet, with great deference to so respectable an authority

^u "The antients," says Dr. Tatham, "had no fashions, and fashion has been the enemy and disgrace of all the polite arts in modern times."

as Mr. Knight, I must feel compelled to dissent from the opinion given by him, in the following passage, on the incongruity of Grecian architecture and sculpture with English scenery:—“ In the rich lawns and shrubberies of England,” says this elegant writer, “ they lose all that power to please which they so eminently possess on the barren hills of Agrigentum and Segesta, “ or the naked plains of Paestum and Athens.”—“ In our parks and gardens they stand wholly unconnected with all that surrounds them,—mere, unmeaning excrescences, or, what is worse, manifestly meant for ornament, and therefore having no accessory character, but that of ostentatious vanity: so that, instead of exciting any interest, they vitiate and destroy that, which the naturalized objects of the country connected with them would otherwise excite.” It is not possible for any one to be more sensible to

the powerful operation of the associating principle than myself; I can therefore readily admit, with Mr. Knight, the full effect of associating these beautiful edifices with the barren and naked hills, upon which some of them were placed. But though Agrigentum and Segesta are now barren hills, and Paestum is reduced to a desolate plain; yet, be it remembered that this was not always the character of these places, nor was it the general character of the scenery amid which such structures were reared. Plato delivered his lectures in a place shaded with groves, on the banks of the river Ilissus, called The Academy. The Lyceum, in which Aristotle lectured, was a spot of a similar character, where there were trees, and walks beautifully shaded. Zeno taught in a portico, or colonnade, distinguished from other buildings of that sort (of which the Athenians had many), by the name of the

variegated portico, the walls being decorated with various paintings of Polygnotus and Myro, two capital masters of that transcendent period. Epicurus addressed his hearers in those well-known gardens, called after his own name, the Gardens of Epicurus. Horace tells us that, when a student at Athens, it was his delight

“Inter silvas Academi querere verum.”

Hence, then, I feel reluctant to admit that the forms of a Grecian portico or temple “in the rich lawns and shrubberies of ‘England,’ are “mere unmeaning ex-“crescences,”—and that, placed in such situations, “they lose all their power to “please.” Where, on the contrary, may forms so exquisite be more appropriately placed, than where cultured nature exhibits so many and such powerful fascinations? and the associating principle might here too, greatly augment the pleasurable feeling afforded by such a combination—

by leading the mind insensibly from the view of these exquisite works of art, to the recollection of that refined people and of that fascinating region from whence they were imported.

But it is not alone in private districts that the effects of taste in rural decoration may be displayed to advantage. Improvements of this nature may take a much wider range, and thus become more important, even in a national view, than many at present would be willing to allow.

Those who have travelled on the Continent, but especially in Germany and France, will often have remarked the beauty of the environs of many of the provincial towns. I mean here that beauty which they derive from being laid out in embellished walks and drives, for the

amusement and recreation of the inhabitants. How easy, and oftentimes at how inconsiderable an expense, may a walk be planned on the banks of a river, through an adjoining wood, or even round a common meadow, which would not only be highly grateful to residents in a town, but, by such attractions, might induce strangers to settle there. But improvements of this nature are rarely thought of in England; and many of the most commanding situations in our island, display such total neglect, that persons are deterred from exploring them, by the unsightly and unaccommodating paths which lead to them. But, in situations in themselves tame and uninteresting, few seem to be aware how much may be accomplished by embellishments, even of the most trifling character, when tastefully and advantageously managed. Almost all our provincial towns might be thus rendered pleasant retreats,

and the health and recreation of the inhabitants greatly promoted by such improvements.

As there is, perhaps, no country in Europe more capable of rural embellishment than England, it is to be regretted that it should, in any part of it, exhibit that character of slovenly neglect, which so commonly disgraces the immediate neighbourhood of our cities and towns.

FINIS.

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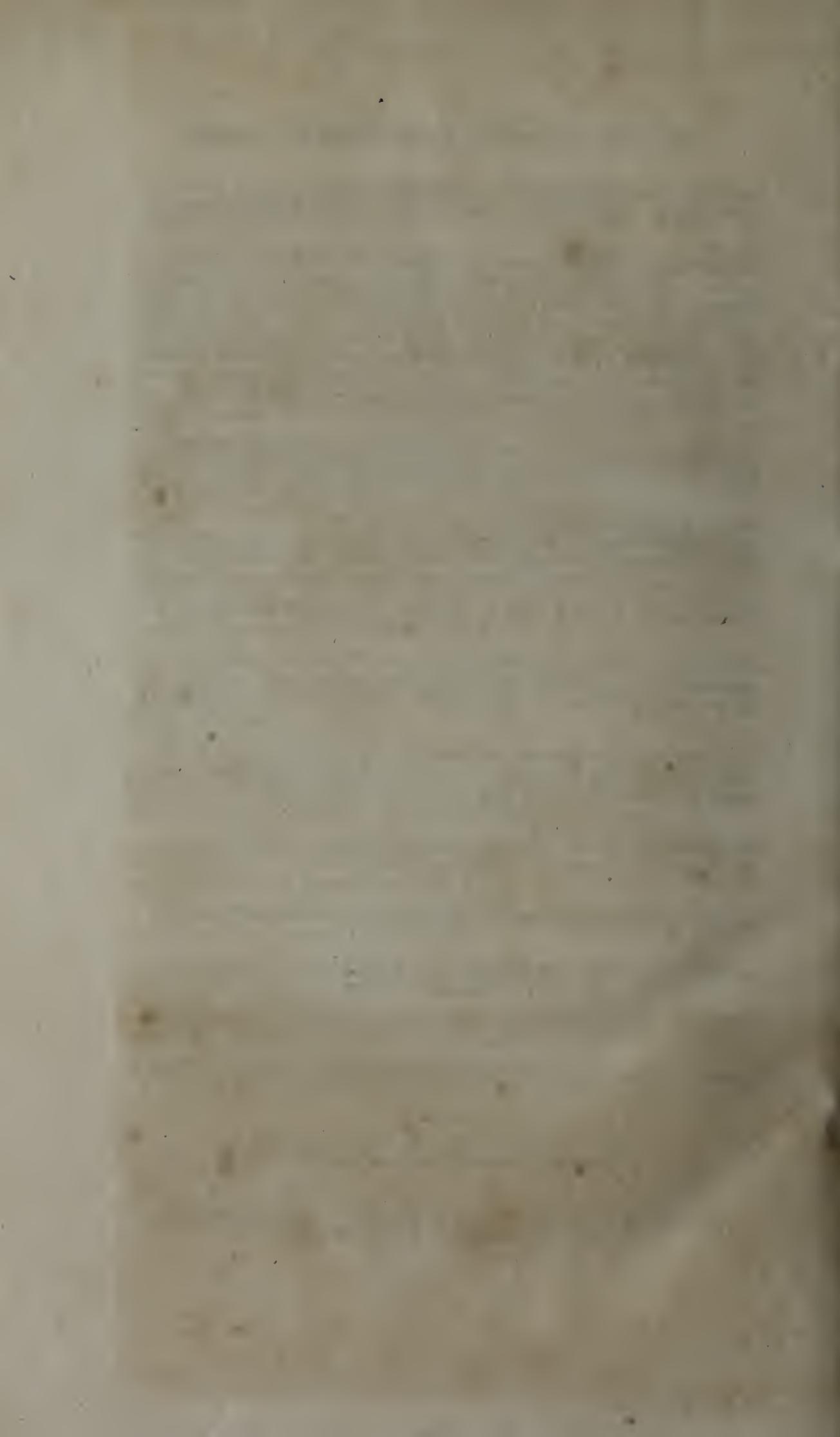
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